

Message Text

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SUBJ: NAMIBIA IN SC: AMB BENNETT'S STATEMENT, DEC 11

REF: USUN 5560

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AMB BENNETT'S STATEMENT IN SC ON
NAMIBIA, DEC 11 PM:

QUOTE

MR. PRESIDENT,

GIVEN RECENT EVENTS, IT IS ENTIRELY FITTING AND, IN FACT,
NECESSARY THAT THE COUNCIL AGAIN REVIEW THE UNIQUE ROLE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS WITH REGARD TO NAMIBIA, AND THAT WE EXAMINE
THE SITUATION IN THAT TERRITORY. WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE
THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR HIS
CONSCIENTIOUS EFFORTS IN CARRYING OUT HIS MANDATE UNDER THE
TERMS OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 309, 319 AND 323, AND
WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION FOR THE DETAILED REPORT OF
APRIL 30 ON HIS CONTACTS WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF SOUTH AFRICA. WITH HINDSIGHT, PERHAPS IT WOULD HAVE BEEN
MORE USEFUL HAD THE COUNCIL MET SOONER TO CONSIDER THE
CONCLUSIONS REACHED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN HIS REPORT.

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IT HAS BEEN NEARLY TWO YEARS SINCE THE COUNCIL FIRST INVITED THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO INITIATE CONTACTS TO ENABLE THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA TO EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION. THE SITUATION IN NAMIBIA TODAY APPEARS ON THE SURFACE MUCH AS IT WAS WHEN RESOLUTION 309 WAS PASSED. IT HAS BEEN SAID, ACCORDINGLY, THAT THE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVES SET BY THE COUNCIL.

RATHER THAN SIMPLY ACCEPTING THIS ASSERTION, HOWEVER, LET US EXAMINE WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE. THROUGH THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S CONSULTATION, UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS VISITED NAMIBIA, EXAMINED CONDITIONS FIRSTHAND, AND MET WITH THE NAMIBIANS PEOPLE. THESE VISITS WERE A CONCRETE ILLUSTRATION TO THE PEOPLE OF THE TERRITORY AND TO THE WORLD OF THE UNITED NATIONS' CONCERN AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR NAMIBIA.

WE SHOULD NOT IN MY DELEGATIONS VIEW UNDERVALUE THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S ACHIEVEMENT IN OBTAINING SOUTH AFRICA'S ASSURANCES ON NAMIBIA. FOREIGN MINISTER MULLER STATED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD RESPECT THE WISHES OF THE WHOLE POPULATION IN NAMIBIA AND WOULD ALLOW ALL POLITICAL PARTIES "FULL AND FREE PARTICIPATION IN THE PROCESS LEADING TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE." HE ADDED THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAD NO INTENTION OF DELAYING SELF-DETERMINATION AND WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL TO DETERMINE MEASURES TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT ALSO ASSERTED THAT IT DID NOT FORESEE THE SUDDEN INDEPENDENCE OF INDIVIDUAL POPULATION GROUPS. ON BALANCE--AND MY DELEGATION BELIEVES THAT HISTORY WILL SUPPORT THIS VIEW--WE BELIEVE THAT THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S EFFORTS HAVE BEEN BENEFICIAL TO UNITED NATIONS' INVOLVEMENT IN THE NAMIBIAN QUESTION.

WE HAVE FOLLOWED RECENT EVENTS IN NAMIBIA, HOWEVER, WITH DEEPENING CONCERN. WE BELIEVE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT COULD HAVE AVOIDED AND STILL CAN AVOID SUCH DEVELOPMENTS WHICH CALL INTO QUESTION ITS GOOD FAITH. WE HAVE IN MIND IN PARTICULAR THAT GOVERNMENT'S PERSISTENCE IN IMPLEMENTING ITS SO-CALLED HOMELANDS POLICY IN EVIDENT CONTRADICTION TO PREVIOUS ASSURANCES GIVEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL. THE NUMEROUS ARRESTS, THE ARBITRARY SUPPRESSION

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OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY, AND THE PUBLIC FLOGGINGS OF DISSIDENTS CONFLICT SHARPLY WITH THE TENOR OF SOUTH AFRICA'S STATEMENTS TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL.

THE REACTION OF MY OWN GOVERNMENT TO SOUTH AFRICA'S ILLEGAL PRESENCE IN NAMIBIA IN FACT PREDATES THESE MOVES. SINCE MAY 1970, WE HAVE FOLLOWED A POLICY OF DISCOURAGING FURTHER AMERICAN

INVESTMENT THERE AND WE HAVE ADVISED POTENTIAL INVESTORS THAT WE WILL NOT INTERCEDE AS A GOVERNMENT TO PROTECT THEIR INVESTMENTS AGAINST CLAIMS OF A FUTURE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT IN THAT TERRITORY.

AS COUNCIL MEMBERS WILL RECALL, IT WAS ON JULY 29, 1970 THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL REQUESTED THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE TO GIVE AN ADVISORY OPINION ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

"WHAT ARE THE LEGAL CONSEQUENCES FOR STATES OF THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF SOUTH AFRICA IN NAMIBIA, NOTWITHSTANDING SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 276 (1970)?"

THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATED IN BOTH THE WRITTEN AND ORAL PHASES OF THE ARGUMENT OF THE CASE. THE UNITED STATES POSITION WAS THAT THE UNITED NATIONS HAD SUCCEEDED TO THE SUPERVISORY POWERS OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS OVER THE MANDATE GRANTED SOUTH AFRICA TO ADMINISTER NAMIBIA, AND THAT THEREFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAD VALIDLY TERMINATED THAT MANDATE BY ITS RESOLUTION 2145 OF OCT 27, 1966. THE UNITED NATIONS HAD ASSUMED DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE TERRITORY AND SOUTH AFRICA WAS UNDER AN OBLIGATION TO WITHDRAW ITS ADMINISTRATION. UNTIL IT DID SO, HOWEVER, ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA CONTINUED. ON JUNE 21, 1971, THE COURT HANDED DOWN ITS ADVISORY OPINION, THE CONCLUSIONS OF WHICH WERE CONSONANT WITH THE UNITED STATES POSITION.

THE UNITED STATES REGRETS, MR. PRESIDENT, THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS NOT ABIDED BY THE SPIRIT OF ITS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL. YET, WE ARE RELUCTANT TO ELIMINATE THE POSSIBILITY OF FUTURE TALKS. AS WE ARE ALL AWARE, A NUMBER OF SEEMINGLY INTRACTABLE INTERNATIONAL CONFLICTS AND PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN SOLVED DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS BY PATIENT, DOGGED NEGOTIATIONS. ARE THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA NOT DESERVING OF SIMILAR EFFORTS?
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THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT SUCH DISCUSSIONS ARE ALSO THE MOST REALISTIC WAY OF GAINING SELF-DETERMINATION FOR THE PEOPLE OF NAMIBIA. A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA'S PLANS FOR NAMIBIA REQUIRE MORE SPECIFIC REPLIES. WHAT TIMETABLE DOES SOUTH AFRICA PROPOSE FOR NAMIBIA'S SELF-GOVERNMENT? WHAT STEPS IS SOUTH AFRICA WILLING TO TAKE NOW TO IMPROVE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN THE TERRITORY? THE SECRETARY GENERAL IN OUR VIEW SHOULD BE FREE TO SEEK ANSWERS, AND TO LOOK INTO THE WELFARE OF NAMIBIANS REPORTEDLY ARRESTED FOR SPEAKING WITH VISITING UNITED NATIONS OFFICIALS.

WE SHOULD NOT DELUDE OURSELVES THAT PROGRESS TOWARD NAMIBIAN SELF-DETERMINATION WILL BE QUICK. AS THE SECRETARY GENERAL HAS CAUTIONED, TIME AND PROTRACTED DISCUSSION WILL BE REQUIRED. NONETHELESS, WE BELIEVE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND SOUTH

AFRICA ARE VALUABLE IN ILLUMINATING SOUTH AFRICA'S POLICIES AND ACTIONS. IT IS NEGOTIATION ON NAMIBIA, AS ON OTHER DIFFERENCES, WHICH HOLDS THE PROMISE OF ULTIMATE SUCCESS.

NO MATTER WHAT ONE MAY THINK OF THE SINCERITY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT, RESPONSES ALREADY GIVEN TO THE SECRETWRY GENERAL BY FOREIGN MINISTER MULLER REPRESENTED IMPORTANT DEPARTURES FROM PREVIOUS SOUTH AFRICAN POLICY. THEY SIGNAL OPENINGS WHICH ARE ADMITTEDLY NARROW BUT WHICH WE BELIEVE TO BE WORTH FURTHER EXPLORATION. UNQUOTE.
BENNETT

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